

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

**This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:**

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

**1-3. (canceled).**

**4. (currently amended):** A composition comprising a strain of lactic acid bacteria selected from the group consisting of a biologically pure culture of *Lactobacillus plantarum* ONRIC b0239 (FERM BP-10064) and a biologically pure culture of *Lactobacillus plantarum* ONRIC b0240 (FERM BP-10065), in an amount effective to stimulate mucosal immunity, and an edible carrier, wherein the composition is ~~capable of stimulating mucosal immunity, and is in~~ the form of a food or beverage.

**5. (canceled).**

**6. (previously presented):** The composition according to claim 4, wherein said composition is a fermented milk, lactic acid bacteria beverage, fermented vegetable beverage, fermented fruit beverage, or fermented soymilk beverage.

**7. (canceled).**

**8. (withdrawn):** A method of stimulating mucosal immunity in a human subject in need of such stimulation, comprising administering to said human subject the composition of claim 4 or claim 17.

**9. (canceled).**

**10. (withdrawn-previously presented):** A method of promoting IgA production in a human subject in need of such IgA production promoting treatment, comprising, administering to said human subject the composition of claim 4 or 18.

**11-15. (canceled).**

**16. (previously presented):** The composition of claim 4, wherein said composition is in the form of granules, a powder, a tablet, an effervescent product or a pudding.

**17. (currently amended):** A pharmaceutical composition for human mucosal immunostimulation comprising a strain of lactic acid bacteria selected from the group consisting of a biologically pure culture of *Lactobacillus plantarum* ONRIC b0239 (FERM BP-10064) and a biologically pure culture of *Lactobacillus plantarum* ONRIC b0240 (FERM BP-10065), in an amount effective to stimulate mucosal immunity, and a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient or diluent.

**18. (currently amended):** A pharmaceutical composition for promoting human IgA production comprising a strain of lactic acid bacteria selected from the group consisting of a biologically pure culture of *Lactobacillus plantarum* ONRIC b0239 (FERM BP-10064) and a biologically pure culture of *Lactobacillus plantarum* ONRIC b0240 (FERM BP-10065), in an amount effective to promote human IgA production in mucosae, and a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient or diluent.